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# *The Little Heroine of Poverty Flat*

Elizabeth Maxwell Comfort

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"The little figure in scarlet." Page 32.

THE  
LITTLE HEROINE  
OF POVERTY FLAT

*A TRUE STORY*

BY  
ELIZABETH MAXWELL COMFORT

*ILLUSTRATED*



NEW YORK  
THOMAS WHITTAKER

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# THE LITTLE HEROINE OF POVERTY FLAT.

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## CHAPTER I.

### POVERTY FLAT.

UP among the Rocky Mountains, nestled under the tall, sheltering pines, lay the little mining camp of Poverty Flat, nearly ten thousand feet above sea level. Close on all sides the mountains rose, towering thousands of feet above, until it seemed as if their snowy crests pierced the blue heaven itself.

This queer little triangle was the only

level spot large enough to build a dozen cabins on near the "Silver Heart" mine. Below it a narrow gulch stretched its irregular length, and a tiny river tossed and sang over its rocky bed.

The little cabins were built of rough-hewn logs, well chinked with mud, and here the miners and their families lived. A rugged road found its way down the mountain's steep slope, "zigzagging" down into the gulch, over a "corduroy" bridge spanning the riotous stream, then, climbing again up the other side, was lost to sight in the dense purple-green pine forest beyond. This was the wagon trail that led from the railroad terminus to Lone Man's Gulch, fifteen miles from Poverty Flat, westward. Summit, the railroad terminus, was fifteen miles east of Poverty Flat.

Once a week in summer time the stage,

with its four great horses, rattled noisily through. Once a month only in winter time—and if there was a blockade of snow not even as often as that. Heavy freight wagons, drawn by six strong horses or mules, brought the necessary supplies to the little settlements, and the ore from the mine was carried to the railroad in the same way. Some day, when the great mine, "Silver Heart," was fully developed, the railroad would be extended to Poverty Flat; but as yet the tiny hamlet was very much cut off from the outer world—a little hard-working world in itself. All the men—there were about thirty of them—worked in the mine "Silver Heart" owned by the Transcontinental Mining Company. The women toiled equally hard at home, keeping up a brave struggle against poverty and high prices, for the price of liv-



ing keeps pace with the altitude in these remote mountain regions—the higher up you go, the higher price you pay for the least thing you may need.

Only the care-free, happy children knew nothing of the burden of poverty that rested so heavily upon the tired shoulders of their elders. Through all the brief, bright summer, brilliant with flowers and sunlight, they played in their cloudland kingdom under the fragrant pines. Life was one long play day to these sturdy little mountaineers, who never felt the lack of school or training of any sort.

Priceless to them were the shining bits of mica they dug from their little mines, and the glistening pyrites they gathered from the shining bed of the merry mountain stream were far more precious than the dull heaps of ore brought up out

of the mine "Silver Heart" where their fathers toiled with drill, pick, and shovel.

None knew better than these bright-eyed little folk where the biggest, sweetest wild strawberries hid their scarlet heads; where the great red raspberries grew among the rocks, looking like big drops of wine when the sun shone through them. They knew every slope where the sweet purple huckleberries grew; and they could pilot you to the deep, quiet pools where the speckled trout glittered in their sheen of silver striped with scarlet, black, and gold.

What a happy, contented lot they were, these merry, brown little mountaineers! They would not have exchanged their kingdom in cloudland for all the acres of Central Park, if they had ever heard anything about such a place, which isn't at all likely.

But there was one little girl who had known different days and better times, she thought, and rightly, too. She sighed often as she remembered her bright, happy school days. When Patrick Fleming moved to Poverty Flat from his comfortable prairie home his little daughter Nora had been compelled to leave the school and the teacher she loved. Although the youngest in her class, she had been the first in the ranks, and her childish ambition was fired to become "a lovely lady, like Miss Grant, with a grand education and a piano."

Miss Grant had been very fond of her bright, loving little pupil, and had promised to give her music lessons during vacation. But alas! all these bright prospects were rudely dashed to the ground when Patrick Fleming took his family to this remote mountain hamlet

where there was neither school, nor priest, nor anyone, except the foreman of the mine, who knew anything about books or the "rule of three."

Nora was almost heartbroken over this unhappy turn of affairs; but she had the true spirit and bravely determined to keep what she had learned, and so began faithfully to review every page she had gone over "so's not to lose anything," she explained to the foreman one day, who found her in the woods puzzling over an example in fractions.

"Some day, maybe, a teacher will come here," she said, lifting her big, dark eyes to his face, "and then, you see, I'll be ready to go right on. Only," she added, with a sigh, "it's hard work doing sums by one's self."

Richard Davis' heart was touched. "You brave little thing!" he said warmly.

"You shan't go on alone—I'll help you, dear—if you'd like to have me. We'll begin right off; let's see what the trouble is with this example"—taking her slate, that showed queer water marks among the figures. "We won't have any more tears on these sums, eh, Nora?" he said, smiling kindly down at the little girl.

"Oh, Mr. Davis, you're so kind, so good! I'll never, never cry again!" exclaimed the delighted Nora. "But the answer *wouldn't* come right, and I do want an education so! I'll do anything for you. I can mend and darn. I'll sew on all your buttons and darn all your stockings; indeed I will."

"Bless your dear little heart!" answered Davis. "I guess I'm going to get the best of the bargain. Well, all right, then. Now for that example."

So under the pines on the brown

mountain slope the lessons began and continued three or four times a week until cold weather drove Nora indoors to study. After that Davis came down for an hour or two, three evenings in the week. He found an unlooked for pleasure in helping Nora. Her bright welcome, the good lessons she always had, her warm gratitude to him, and the many little confidences she gave him, showing in her sweet, childlike way her affection for him, had a wonderfully softening influence over the young man, far removed from all home associations and restraints. He became very fond of his little friend, and grew to prefer the cheery though humble cabin of the Flemings to the society he found in the saloon—the only place there was where the men could pass the long winter evenings together.

Nora had another devoted friend, Tim Mallory, a stalwart young miner. Tim, whose heart under all his apparent roughness was a very tender one, had taken a great fancy to the beautiful, bright little girl who always had a kind word and helpful hand for everyone, himself included. He wanted to do something for Nora, for he knew it was she who always put up the lunch so neatly for him, bringing it to him every day at the mine with her father's.

Tim waited for his opportunity, and one day, early in winter, he brought to Nora a pair of beautiful Norwegian snowshoes—long, light, and slender—just adapted to her slender feet and ankles.

Then he gave the delighted child lessons in the art of snowshoeing.

"She takes to thim snowshoes like a duck to wather," he said to her mother

afterward. "An' it's fear she's not acquainted with, God bless her! She'll beat any man in the camp afore the winter's over; see if she don't! An' they're puttin' the roses intil her cheeks an' the stars in her purty eyes. Sure they'll bring her good luck some day."



## CHAPTER II.

## THE SNOWSLIDE.

EVERY day, summer and winter, through storm and sunshine, Nora had carried a warm dinner and pot of hot coffee over to the mine for her father and Tim. This was the happiest part of the day for her; it was her own particular hour.

In the summer time she loved to follow the course of the merry brook that tumbled down the mountain side, and gather bouquets of lovely flowers with which to brighten the windows of the little cabin that was now her home; or she would pick a pailful of berries for supper, while her clear young voice filled

the silent woods with melody of song. Many a lonely miner, plying his pick and shovel, would stop to listen to the sweet tones, and take up his work again with a lighter heart, blessing the sweet-voiced singer.

But winter had closed in very early; the snows had been unusually heavy and frequent, and very little of Poverty Flat could be seen now, except the dark rims of the queer, barrel-topped chimneys, from which the blue, filmy smoke rose in graceful wreaths and lost itself in the clear wintry air. The walls formed by digging paths from the cabins quite hid the little dwellings from sight, but the banks of snow kept them very warm and comfortable.

The flower-hedged path to the mine was entirely lost, and in its stead a white, hard-trodden, narrow trail, shut in

on both sides by a wall of glistening snow, wound along the slope down into the gulch. It was not a difficult trail, and the high wall shut out the wind that howled outside through the forest and down the mountain.

Nora was sure-footed and the trail dropped gently by many turns and windings to the narrow, snow-bound valley across which was the entrance of the mine "Silver Heart."

After leaving the warm lunch for her father and Tim, Nora always had an hour or more for her favorite winter sport, snowshoeing.

It was a spirited picture she made, clad in bright cloak and hood, her great blue-gray eyes shining, her cheeks glowing like roses, her bright hair blown in "lovelocks" all about her face, while she sped over the glittering ice-incrusted

snow, skillfully steering her way clear of stumps and trees. It would have been a picture for an artist to rave over, though Nora would have become a "dissolving view" before he could set up his camera.

"'Deed an' somethin' will come of that snowshoein' yit," exclaimed Mrs. Flaherty one day, as she stood at her door and caught a glimpse of a swift dash of scarlet which they knew belonged to Nora.

"Did yez ever see the loikes of that, now! A slidin' about loike a strake of lightnin' on two bits av floorin'! The saints preserve her for the good child she is anyway, for she's the mainstay of her mother wid the childer, if her purty head *is* clear turned wid the snowshoein'."

"Somethin' was to come of the snowshoein'," but not what the good woman

had implied in her prediction. Little did anyone imagine what was to be brought about through Nora's wonderful skill in snowshoeing—what a blessing this skill and her fearlessness were to prove to all the camp, some day.

The entrance of the great mine "Silver Heart" was at the foot of the mountain across the narrow gulch. On both sides of the gulch the steep, lofty mountains pressed closely, glistening now like polished marble in the heavy snow that covered them from summit to base.

The one man who did not work in the "Silver Heart" was the saloon and store-keeper. Summer and winter, fair days and stormy days, were all alike to these miners, digging, drilling, blasting out the precious ore, far within the heart of the mountain, hundreds of feet away from the daylight.

It was now February. For several days the weather had been very mild and springlike. There had been one or two little snowslides here and there, that were really nothing in themselves, only warnings of what might happen when the heavy snow, higher up the mountain's steep, should become loosened. Then, borne on by its own tremendous might, rushing down the mountain with thunderous roar, loosening mighty rocks and bearing them down, and uprooting great trees, it would carry death and destruction to everything in its path.

Since the "mild spell" had set in the men going to and from the mine had watched the steep, shining mountain side above the mine with a little anxiety.

There were but few trees on this rocky slope, only hundreds of feet of dazzling snow rising far above, until the fair.

beautiful outline shone clear cut against the blue sky. That a terrible snowslide was likely to occur almost any day the men felt very sure, for they could see, far above, here and there, seams and cracks in the white, shining surface. But all their lives the miners had been accustomed to dangers, and so a possible catastrophe did not hinder them from going to their daily work in the mine. They would merely shake their heads as they glanced up at the snowy height, so grand and awful in its beauty, and say as they went down into the mine:

"If she'll only hold off till night she can come; only let us fellers git well out of her way, and then—boom! she may go! She'll be a stunner when she does come, you bet!"

One morning about the middle of February Nora started as usual to take the

hot luncheon to her father and Tim. It was a lovely day, unusually mild and bright, with soft, fleecy clouds drifting over the snowy summits. Nora bent her steps merrily over the white-walled trail, caroling a happy song as she went. She reached that part of the trail where it made a turn and dipped suddenly into the gulch. What was her horror and amazement to find all traces of the trail gone!

She looked across the narrow gulch to the mine entrance. Where *was* the mine entrance? And the little shaft house, and other buildings—where were they? Gone! Every trace of life was gone! Everything—men, buildings, and all—buried under sixty feet of snow, trees, and rocks, massed and packed together in one great, awful ruin!

The dreaded slide had come, and it had



not "held off till night," but had carried ruin and death down the mountain, while the men, unknowing, worked within, and the sun smiled overhead.

That terrible mass of snow, rocks, and broken trees that filled the gulch was a living tomb, and every man of Poverty Flat was buried in it!

Nora sank down on the snow in an agony of grief and horror and buried her face in her hands as if to shut out the awful sight.

"Oh, dear Lord!" she gasped, "save papa and Richard and Tim. Oh, save them all, for Jesus' sake!"

Suddenly she sprang to her feet, her eyes burning, her lips set with a great resolve. Who was there to save the men? All the *men* of the camp were there under sixty feet of snow. *She herself* must save them! Here was the answer

to her prayer for help. She must go for it over to Lone Man's Gulch; help must come from there; and it was twelve miles away by the foot trail over the range.

Nora seemed to have grown years older in those few terrible moments.

Quickly she laid her plans. She determined to tell no one of her discovery, but to go back for her snowshoes as usual, and take her way over the trail toward Lone Man's Gulch. Leaving her pail and coffee jug in the snow, where they would not be likely to be seen, she hurried back to the little shed where her snowshoes were kept.

Quickly strapping 'these on—Tim's gift, she thought, with a dry sob, as she firmly secured the fastenings—she seized her long pole and started out as if for her usual noonday sport. With set, pale face, and wide-open, burning eyes that

saw nothing but the horror over there in that valley of death, she sped down the snowy incline, past the cabins and into the gulch.

Mrs. Flaherty, chatting with a neighbor by a window, saw the child flash by as if she had winged feet.

"'Deed an' did yez see that, now!" she said. "What's the matther wid the child? Sure wasn't she as pale as a ghost, wid niver a smile on her face?"

"Och, but she's a quare child, is Nora Fleming, and ould for her years; but she's good and true, and there's the makin' of a foine woman in her—if she don't end her days up a shtump av a tree wid her snowshoein' craze."

Mike Flaherty was under the snow, but his wife little dreamed of it, or of Nora's mission to save the men.

## CHAPTER III.

## A PERILOUS JOURNEY.

THE nearest camp was Lone Man's Gulch, twelve miles away, on the other side of the range. It was a tramp that few strong men would care to undertake in midwinter. Yet Nora, a little girl of only eleven years, never once hesitated at the thought of the cold or danger; she had but one thought—the buried men who would die if help did not come to them.

She knew the trail over to Lone Man's Gulch was a long and difficult one, even in midsummer, when the snow lay only on the heights, for she had been over it once, but she felt sure that she could

make the camp with her good snow-shoes; so she bravely took the wagon trail through the forest for a number of miles, keeping a sharp lookout for the foot trail that branched off more directly over the mountain. The wagon trail was not so steep, but it was farther by three miles.

Nora, wise in mountain craft, remembered that the foot trail could only be distinguished now by the blazed trees, and so kept a sharp watch for this "blaze" on the upper side of the wagon trail.

When men take a new route through the forest they chip off, with their axes, large pieces of bark from the trees, to the right and left as they go. This is called a "blaze," perhaps because the yellow wood, shorn of its bark, gleams something like a flame or blaze on the dark

brown trunk of the tree. It is a sure guide always, and almost the only guide through the dense, trackless forest.

For some miles Nora followed the wagon trail; it was clear and uncut by any sleds or wheels. It wound gradually up the mountain, and the snowshoeing was not difficult, only that it was uphill all the way without any chance for a swift slide. But Nora kept steadily on, without stopping to rest a moment, for she knew she would have to make many pauses for breath when she struck off upon the steeper foot trail that went over the mountain. She kept a sharp lookout for the "blaze," for, wise little mountaineer that she was, she knew the foot trail, although more difficult, was the shorter way to Lone Man's Gulch.

The sky that had been so fair and clear at noon became overcast with heavy

clouds about three o'clock; the wind howled through the forest, and the snow began to fall fast. Nora did not mind this while under the shelter of the trees—she was comparatively well protected there—but she wondered if the storm would be very bad when she left the woods, and hoped that it might “hold up for the poor men’s sake.”

“Oh, I won’t mind the snow, I won’t care for anything if I can only get there and save the men.” She began to fear she had passed the “blaze.” No! there it was at last. She stopped a minute or two to rest and take a good breath for the steep ascent which was now before her. Then, planting her pole firmly, she began her difficult climb up the narrow foot trail. Panting, breathless, often clinging to the trees, she toiled up the steep trail for two miles, until, almost out

of breath with her long, hard climb, she came out at last from the forest upon the wild, bleak, wind-swept mountain side, above the timber line, over *11,200 feet above sea level!* That is almost as high as *two Mt. Washingtons*, one piled above the other. Nora, however, thought nothing of the height of the mountain; she was glad to leave the dark, gloomy forest, though out of its shelter the bitter, pitiless cold pierced her like a knife. She stopped a moment to take breath, and to make sure that her snowshoes were still securely fastened. Then she looked about her. There was no trace of any trail there now, no landmarks of any kind to guide her over that glistening waste of untrodden snow that clothed the mountain top and hid even the rocks that in summer time had marked the course of the trail. Nora had been over



the trail once, the summer before, and remembered the general direction. She remembered that it led to the left, climbing around the very edge of a steep, high precipice. If she could only make that one narrow pass safely! Faster and faster fell the blinding snow, and fiercely blew the bitter wind about the child's slight figure. But the little heroine, brave and true-hearted, never faltered, never once thought of turning back from the wild storm and clouds that enveloped the mountain. On she toiled; the little struggling figure in scarlet was the only sign of life on all that gloomy, lonely mountain side, battling with the pitiless storm, her one thought to save the men back there under the snow in Poverty Flat.

The ghostly mountains rose all around, grim and white against the

stormy sky. The wind beat the fine, icy snow against her furiously, blinding her so that she could scarcely see her way, and she was now so stiff with cold that she could hardly drag her numbed limbs along. She reached the narrow, perilous pass, half dead with cold and fatigue, keeping close to the rocks that loomed above her, knowing well that she would be hurled down, down, hundreds of feet below, if the wind should but take her off her feet—poor little feet, so stiff and numb she could hardly step upon them. To add to the terrors creeping over her the short winter day was closing, and darkness was settling over the wild, stormy mountain. A starless night would soon enfold her, and then what should she do if Lone Man's Gulch were not reached?

The terrible pass was made in safety

by the lonely little toiler; still no lights shone out from any settlement or cabin. But Nora remembered that it was not yet time for that; she would see the lights, she knew, when she reached the point where the trail took a downward turn. Then she could once more "shoot" over the snowy wastes, down through the woods again—only her feet were so heavy—something seemed to hold her back.

A sleepiness began to steal over her, but she tried to rouse herself, and the story of how the blessed Lord had fasted in the wilderness came into her mind. She wondered dimly if there had been blinding snow and howling winter storm upon that sacred mountain so long, long ago; and she wondered if the Lord had suffered with the bitter cold. But angels had come to him, the Savior of men,

and ministered to him. Mightn't they come also to her, one of his little ones, alone upon the stormy mountain top, for the sake of saving men?

The thought gave her fresh courage, new strength. Through the fast gathering darkness the brave child struggled on, each step growing more uncertain and faltering as the bitter cold now began to gain the mastery.

She passed the point where the trail turned down toward the Gulch, when, her stiffened hands failing to plant her pole, she fell, and unable to regain her footing, sank in a heap upon the snow, with a prayer on her poor blue lips for the men she was trying to save. God pity her! The camp was so near! Oh! why had her trusty pole failed her just then?

Nora was neither cold nor tired now;

beautiful visions flitted before her, though she could not see the twinkling lights of Lone Man's Gulch just below that she had almost reached—that she might have reached but for that slip. The wind became more quiet; it had spent its wild fury, and now sighed through snow-laden pines as if it were sorry—alas! all too late—for its wanton cruelty to so frail and small a creature.

Softly the fleecy snow fell over the quiet form, and soon covered the brave child heart that had risked life itself for the sake of other lives. Just a little mound there was now, over which the snow still fell, all silently, while the repentant wind moaned about it sorrowfully.

Only God and his angels knew what was hidden there under the silent snow on the lonely mountain side.

## CHAPTER IV.

## A CRY FOR HELP.

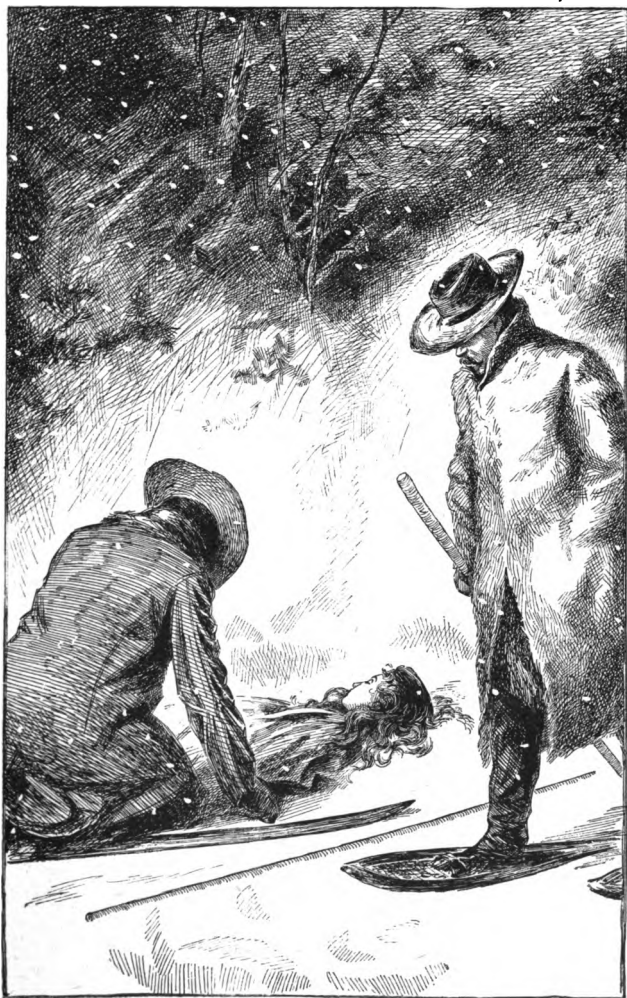
THROUGH the storm and deepening twilight two men came along the trail from their mine. They walked single file, for the trail was narrow and two could not walk abreast; they went slowly, for the snow was "drifty" and darkness was settling fast in the woods.

"Whew! but it's a bitter ending of a lovely day," exclaimed the man ahead to his companion. "I'd hate to be caught out or lost on a night like this. By George! what's this?" as his long snowshoe struck suddenly against something that lay directly in his path, nearly overturning him.

He caught himself, and, recovering his balance, stooped down to examine the cause of his upset. He started back horrified. "Great Scott! Jem, it's a little girl!" he cried. "In Heaven's name, how came she here?"

"What in thunder are you talking about, Dick? A girl! You're crazy, man! Lord! so it is!" exclaimed Jem, hurrying as fast as he could up to Dick Wallace, who was trying to raise a stiff form, in a scarlet cloak, from a mound of snow. Jem's eyes seemed as if they were ready to start from their sockets in horror and amazement. "Lord pity her!" he muttered. "The pretty thing is clear froze to death."

"Just see here, Jem," said Dick as they lifted the unconscious Nora from her snowy bed; "she's got snowshoes on, and her fingers are fairly frozen to this staff!



"Great Scott! Jem, it's a little girl!" Page 38.





Oh, you poor little one!" he murmured, with a rush of tears to his honest eyes, "what does this all mean?"

They carefully unfastened the snow-shoes in their frozen strappings, and with all gentleness, but with great difficulty, finally succeeded in loosening the stiffened fingers from the pole to which poor little Nora had clung to the last. Then Dick lifted her tenderly in his strong arms, softly kissing the white face as he did so, while his eyes filled with tears and a lump in his throat choked him so that he could not speak. For he thought of a little girl away "back East," in a warm, comfortable home—a little sister, with just such bright curly locks and long lashes, who had clung to him and kissed him with tears and sobs when he went away. He held the lifeless form of the little waif closely, as if to warm

her if possible, murmuring tender words in the unheeding ears, and hurried with all possible speed down the trail, while Jem, too horrified at their strange "find" to speak, followed in silence, bearing the snowshoes and pole.

"I'm going to Mrs. Morris'," said Dick as they entered the camp. "She's the best nurse in the camp, and has the best house. She's near by, too, and the quicker we get to work on this child the better. Just get my snowshoes off, won't you?"

The snowshoes were quickly unfastened and kicked aside, and Dick, with long, rapid strides soon reached Mrs. Morris' cabin.

That good woman was busy getting supper when Dick flung open the door without knocking, and walked in with his unconscious burden. This sudden, uncer-

emonious entrance of the big, strapping fellow took her so by surprise that she came very near dropping the pan of meat she had just taken from the stove.

"Well, if you aint the beatenest! For mercy's sake, Dick Wallace, what *hev* you got!" she exclaimed, perceiving for the first time Dick's strange load, and dropping her knife in her astonishment.

"Excuse my coming in so, Mrs. Morris, but I've got a child here, a little girl I found up on the trail. She's frozen to death, I'm afraid," said Dick, passing quickly through the kitchen and laying the unconscious child on a bed in the room adjoining.

"Lord save us! Where did you find her? Up on the trail, did you say? How'd she come there? Where could she *hev* come from?" Mrs. Morris had quickly followed Dick into the bedroom,

and was removing the frozen outer clothes as she poured forth this volley of questions.

"Rush out, Dick, and git that tub of water standin' outside. We've got to dump the poor baby right into ice-cold water fer to thaw her out." Jem was out in the kitchen, having followed Dick in, and in a trice the two men had brought in a large tub of water to the bedroom. They broke and removed the ice, and placed the stiff, cramped body of the child in the tub up to her neck.

"Ugh! but this does seem cruel, don't it?" said Mrs. Morris, with a shudder, "but it's the only thing to be done for anyone froze as bad as this here poor child. Jem! do take that there meat off the stove; I clean forgot it. We can't stop for no supper till we find some life

here. God bless the baby; if there's a spark of life left in her we'll find it."

After a time the stiffened limbs became pliable, but there was no sign of life. Mrs. Morris gently removed the rest of Nora's clothes, and with Dick's assistance rubbed the lifeless little body with snow.

"There aint no camp 'twixt here and Poverty Flat, nor cabin neither, is there?" asked Mrs. Morris after they had worked some time in silence. "That's fifteen miles off; she surely couldn't 'a' come from there!"

"It's beyond me where she could have come from. I'm certain I've seen her face before; I never forget a face."

They worked untiringly for an hour, but still there was no sign of returning consciousness. Dick was in despair.

"God keep the dear little one!" he

whispered brokenly, as he bent over the still, white face. "I'm afraid she's gone beyond our power to bring her back."

"Don't lose heart, Dick," said Mrs. Morris encouragingly, but with a suspicious tremble in her voice. "We aint going to give up yet."

They worked on in anxious silence for another half hour, when Mrs. Morris exclaimed in a glad whisper: "Oh, good land, Dick! I do believe she's comin' to! Jest put your hand to' her heart here! Don't you feel jist a *leetle* beat? Jem! You there? Fix some brandy and water quick, ef you know how!"

"Ef I know how! You bet I can!" said Jem, taking a flask from his pocket and mixing the drink. He brought it in in a twinkling. "Do you think she's comin' to?" he asked anxiously.

"Well, there's sure signs of life and

we're hopin' for more," said Mrs. Morris, taking the brandy and water from Jem's hand. After repeated efforts she succeeded in forcing a spoonful between Nora's closed teeth, then after a while another. By and by, after what seemed to the anxious watchers an interminable time, their efforts were finally rewarded by seeing the dark eyes slowly open. They gave her more of the liquor, which was swallowed with difficulty, and the long lashes drooped again.

Jem had told the news at the saloon of the "lost froze child" they had found in the edge of the woods, and Mrs. Morris' little kitchen by this time was crowded with curious, wondering men and women, craning their necks in the doorway of the bedroom to get a look at the child. Great was their wonder, many their conjectures over the mysterious stranger.



"'Taint likely the pore leetle creetur'll ever speak agin," said a grizzled miner who had managed to wedge himself into the bedroom. "I reckon she's done for."

"Don't you say that, now," said Mrs. Morris indignantly. "Me and Dick here haint ben workin' for nothin' these two hours. Jest you wait; she's breathin'. Take a leetle drink, dearie," she said coaxingly as she put the spoon to Nora's lips again, and lifted her head slightly. Again the child slowly opened her eyes, and this time she moved them slightly. Seeing strange faces about her, Nora seemed to comprehend that somehow she had reached Lone Man's Gulch.

Gathering all her strength for the effort, to the amazement of everyone she threw out her arms with a wild cry: "Poverty Flat! Go quick to the men;

all, all are buried in the slide at the mine. Oh, help! help!"

With that cry she fell back upon the pillow in so deathlike a swoon that it seemed as if the last spark of life had fled forever.

Awestruck the men looked at each other for a moment in utter silence. The two or three women there sobbed. There was no mistaking that message. Clear and distinct it had rung through the rooms, that one cry for help. They knew now what had brought "the stranger child" to their camp, through the storm, over the long, perilous trail from Poverty Flat.

"God help us, boys! d'ye hear that?" spoke up one of the men. "No, she aint wanderin' neither!" he added indignantly as another suggested that she was "wanderin' in her mind from bein' froze."

"God knows she's wandered far enough, poor baby, to tell us of the trouble over there to Poverty Flat. I know all about that there mine. It's the 'Silver Heart,' and it's in the meanest kind of a place fer a slide to ketch a feller in. An' that there slip of a girl layin' about dead has come all the way from there alone to tell us fellers to help 'em out'n the slide."

"That's about the size of it, boys, and I guess there aint no question as to what we've got to do, and durned quick, too, you bet!"

"I guess us fellers can go over that there trail ef that slim bit of a girl made it," said Jem. "She's given her sweet life to git help," he added, with a gulp, "and I guess there aint a man here as will fail her. Quick, boys! Every man shoulder a shovel or pick and bring his

whisky along. It'll be needed, every drop of it."

It was not many minutes before a company of men, strong, stalwart fellows, well equipped, set out on snowshoes over the same trail that Nora had taken a few hours before. A wild, terrible journey that was, through the black night and howling storm; but the heroic little messenger who had brought the news that sent the rescuing party out lay unconscious, at death's door, in a cabin in Lone Man's Gulch.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE RESCUE.

AS the hours passed and Nora did not return from her errand to the mine her mother began to grow uneasy. It was so unusual for Nora to stay away long without permission. Mrs. Fleming made up her mind that something must have happened, and, throwing a shawl over her head, started out to look for the child, leaving the other little ones at home to "mind the baby."

She had not gone far when she was met by two women, their faces pale and drawn with grief and terror.

"Oh, Mrs. Fleming!" they cried, "would you believe it? The slide has

buried the men—all—all—not a man is left! Oh, God help us and our fatherless children. What are we going to do?"

"The slide!" Poor Mrs. Fleming sank to the ground with a moan.

"Och! Pat and Nora, too! They're both there; for she took the lunch to the mine and she's niver come back at all, at all. O Nora, me lamb, me comfort! Sorra speed the day that brought us here."

She rocked back and forth on the snow, all unmindful of the cold and storm, racked with an agony of grief. The other women stood by, wringing their hands and sobbing. Another woman came swiftly up the road toward the group. Her face was as pale as theirs, but there were no tears in her eyes, no moans nor lamentations on her white lips.

“Why do you stand here moaning and crying?” she asked sternly. “Will your tears melt the snow that covers our men? We must work! Must dig them out ourselves if they’re to be saved! There’s but one man left in the camp; and Lone Man’s Gulch cannot be reached in this storm in time to do any good. Get up, Mrs. Fleming; get a shovel and go to work! Working is better than wailing. Every woman in the camp must go to work at the slide.”

Her strong, courageous words put fresh life into the hopeless hearts of the women. They ceased their crying, and ran for shovels, picks, spades, anything that could be used in the work of excavating the men under the snow. From cabin to cabin the brave woman went; she called the saloonkeeper and his boy, who gladly left his empty bar and joined

the ranks of women on their way to the scene of disaster.

They could only guess at the exact location of the entrance to the mine, for all landmarks were gone. The great mountain, grim and bare, rose darkly above the chaos of snow, trees, and rocks.

They worked with frantic energy for hours, through the fast increasing storm, until darkness settled about them, and hands and feet were so stiffened with cold that they could do no more.

Night closed in, and the slow, terrible hours dragged on. No one went to bed; the poor, distressed women could only sit and moan, and wait for the morning, when they could resume their hopeless task.

But help was coming, though the agonized women and weeping children in the desolate cabins did not know it.



Just at midnight the tramping of many feet was heard; then a cheer broke the stillness of the sorrowful night.

The women rushed to their doors. Dear Lord! what did it mean? Had an angel delivered the men from their tomb? Everyone held her breath in terrified wonder as the tramping feet came nearer and nearer. Here was a crowd of twenty men—not the rescued, but a company of deliverers come to the aid of the distressed camp.

Hot coffee was quickly prepared in the four cabins that stood nearest together and the tired, half-frozen men divided into groups of five to take some refreshment.

It did not take them long to drink the coffee, and while drinking it they told how "a child, a slim bit of a girl, was found half froze by Dick Wallace; and when she come to she said for us fellers

to go over quick to Poverty Flat and get the men out of the slide. So here we are at your service."

Mrs. Fleming threw up her hands and gave a cry that startled everyone. "Oh, God be praised! It was Nora, the light av me eyes. Holy Mother pity her! she went there alone. Where is me lamb?" she cried, starting up. "Is it frozen you said she was?" The poor mother seemed beside herself.

But Dick Wallace soothed and comforted her with the assurance that Nora was in the best of hands.

"Mrs. Morris is an 'A1' nurse, and the best woman in the world. She will take care of your little girl as if she were her own. So cheer up, Mrs. Fleming, that's a good woman. You shall have Nora back again as soon as her feet permit her to travel."

"God bless you, lad," sobbed Mrs. Fleming from behind her apron, "but good news will bring the tears. Sure they do me good."

In a very short time the party from Lone Man's Gulch were working lustily at the mountain of snow, tunneling a passage to the mine.

"There's been some good work done here," said Dick; "who's been here?"

"We did what we could," said Mrs. Flaherty, who had piloted them to the mine. "But the darkness fell and we could do no more."

"You saved us a good hour's work," was the encouraging answer, "and that's no small thing at a time like this, my good woman."

All night they worked with sturdy will. What a night of suspense it was to the wives waiting in the cabins on the Flat!

At last, by daylight, they struck some timbers that led them to think they were not far from the entrance. They shouted to the men in the mine. A faint "Hallo!" came back! It gave fresh courage to the rescuers. The entrance was soon reached and the men found within. Alive? Yes, thank God, all were living, though a few were exhausted by the close, bad air, for the air shaft was clogged with snow.

Hurrah! Every man was saved! How the glad cheers rang out upon the morning air! How the women cried for joy, and clung to their dear ones, restored to them so wonderfully from death's very door.

The story of Nora's bravery and of her narrow escape from freezing to death was told again by Dick to the men she had saved. When he finished his story there was not a dry eye among all those

rough, hard men, so used to danger and hardship. Nora, their little favorite, had risked her sweet life for them! They were not ashamed of the tears that filled their eyes, and ran down their weather-beaten cheeks. There had been perfect silence while Dick told the story. Then—"Three cheers for Nora, the brave darlint!" said Tim Mallory in a husky voice. Again the hearty cheers rang out upon the wintry air, waking the sleeping echoes of the rock-walled gulch, resounding through the snowy solitudes, that caught the glad sound and sent it back with answering ring.

## CHAPTER VI.

## WHAT HAPPENED AFTERWARD.

WHEN the men returned to Lone Man's Gulch, Tim Mallory went with them, carrying a bundle of clothing for Nora, and to see for himself how it fared with his little friend.

But when he arrived at Mrs. Morris' Nora did not know him. Her great dark eyes were wild and bright, her face flushed with fever. Both arms and hands were bandaged, also both feet and limbs as far as the knee, so badly frozen were they. How sadly changed from the joyous child of a few days before! Less than two days ago how full of life she had been! Now she lay there, unconscious

of anything, moaning that she must save the men, and the way was so long, so long!

Poor Tim could not bear it. He sat down by the bed and, burying his face in his hands, sobbed like a child. Mrs. Morris slipped out of the room with the tears streaming down her rosy cheeks.

By and by Tim came out into the kitchen, where Mrs. Morris busied herself in an aimless sort of way, wiping the tears from her eyes from time to time.

"Mrs. Morris," he said, "I'm to go back to the Flat and report how the little girl is. How can I ever tell her mother the truth? I can't do it!" and his voice broke. "That poor baby's dyin' in there."

"No, no! not yet, my man," said Mrs. Morris, trying to speak cheerfully. "She's very sick, but while there's life



**Tim sat down by the bed, and buried his face in his hands. Page 60.**





there's hope. If we can save her feet and hands I'm hopin' she'll pull through, please God. You tell her mother I'm keepin' her in bed for a time on account o' her bein' clean tuckered out. I'm a good nurse, though I do say it, and I'll tide the child over if anybody can."

"I'm comin' back, Mrs. Morris, to help take care of her; and I shan't leave her till she's over this, one way or t'other," he added, hastily pulling his cap over his eyes, and turning away, he was soon out of sight.

All through the terrible illness and delirium that followed that fearful journey over the mountain our little Nora had three tender, faithful nurses—Dick Wallace, Tim Mallory, and Mrs. Morris.

There had been many offers of assistance from the kind-hearted people in the Gulch, but Mrs. Morris declined all help

except from Dick and Tim, saying too many changes would be bad for the child.

"You shan't drive me away, Mrs. Morris, for I found her, and I take it that she sort o' belongs to me," said Dick when Mrs. Morris told him she could manage alone. "I'm a good nurse, Mrs. Morris; I've had experience, too, for I took nearly all the care of my little sister Jessie, just Nora's age, through a terrible siege of fever."

That settled it. Dick was forthwith established as assistant nurse and proved invaluable.

"She's all the little sister I ever knowed," said Tim. "I never had nobody to care much for me till I knowed Nora, and she's the best little friend a feller could have."

Frequent messages were sent to the anxious mother in Poverty Flat, who

could not go to her sick child. Tim spent nearly half his time going and coming between the two camps.

At last there came a day when the wild fever left the little sufferer, and the dear eyes looked with the light of reason in them on the friends who watched so anxiously. But she closed her eyes again without having spoken a word, and fell into a deep sleep.

"This sleep will decide the question of her gittin' well," said Mrs. Morris. "She'll either wake up better or she'll sink away before mornin'; but she mustn't be disturbed or woke up."

Tim came tiptoeing in just at that moment, and Dick went out of the house with a very sorrowful face. "What's the matter?" asked Tim.

"Don't make no noise, Tim," answered Mrs. Morris. "Just git on them mocca-

sins of yourn and set by the bed till Nora wakes up, so that she'll see a familiar face lookin' at her. She mustn't be scared the least bit. I'm in hopes that there sleep is a goin' to bring back health to the child, but we can't tell."

So Tim took his station by the bedside of the quiet sleeper. So soft was her breathing, so white her face that he at first thought she was dead, but on listening closely he convinced himself that she was asleep. Yet what a deathlike sleep it was. Five hours he sat there watching the little friend, the only being he had ever had to love in all his rough, lonely life. He thought what "hard lines" it would be for him to lose her; never to have her smile on him again, or call him "dear old Tim," or shout out in her clear, joyous voice for him to "clear the track," for she was "coming full blast."

"I'm a better feller since I knowed her. I jest can't think of losin' her," he thought with a great aching of his faithful heart. "It won't be jestice for her to die."

So he sat watching in sorrowful mood hour after hour, almost as motionless as the sleeping child. At last the faithful vigil was rewarded. Nora stirred slightly, and Tim bent eagerly forward as the great dark eyes slowly opened. They were bigger and darker than ever in the wan, white little face from which the roses and dimples had fled.

Nora looked up, and her glance fell on Tim sitting by the bed. Tim's heart stood still, but he controlled himself. "Well, dear," he said, trying to look and speak naturally. The great rough fellow was as gentle as a woman now. Would Nora know him? he wondered. His sus-

pense was relieved at the first words she spoke.

"Why, Tim!" she said, with a faint smile. "What are you sitting here for? What is the matter?"

The tears stood in Tim's blue eyes. He took Nora's little wasted hand in his own great palm, and said softly:

"You've been a bit sick, Nora, darlin', and I'm jest settin' here to look after you. I've got somethin' nice for you to take that'll strengthen you."

He stepped into the kitchen and brought in a cup of beef tea that Mrs. Morris had ready to give Nora when she should waken.

He placed his arm tenderly under Nora's head and gave her two or three spoonfuls of the broth, then laid her back upon the pillow.

"There, now, go to sleep again, an' Tim

will set by you. You mustn't talk none yit; not till you wake up agin."

Nora closed her eyes, she was too weak to question, and in a moment or so dropped off into a gentle natural slumber, while Tim stole noiselessly into the kitchen to tell the good news to Mrs. Morris and Dick, who were waiting to hear.

"Thank the Lord!" exclaimed the motherly woman, wiping her eyes for very joy. "I jest couldn't 'a' stood it to lose her, no way!"

From that day Nora grew better. When she wakened from her second sleep Tim had told her about how Dick had carried her to Mrs. Morris, and how they had taken care of her.

"Tell them to come in, Tim, I want to see them," Nora had said.

So they both had come into the sick



room, and were quite overcome when Nora thanked them in a weak little voice, and put up her face to kiss them.

By and by she was able to be lifted from the bed where she had lain for weeks, and carried about a little from time to time in the strong arms of Dick or Tim, who were never so happy as when bearing "the little morsel," as they called her, up and down the kitchen to "rest her a bit."

It was joyful news that Tim carried over to the Flat—that Nora was on the road to recovery, and there was no further danger of her losing hands or feet.

One afternoon Nora sat bolstered up in Mrs. Morris' big rocking chair, wondering why Dick, of whom she had become very fond, did not come back. He had been gone since the morning before. Tim was away, too, over in Pov-

erty Flat, for he had been obliged to return to work as soon as Nora was out of danger.

"There's Dick now, dearie," said Mrs. Morris, "and he looks like a soldier with his knapsack strapped to his back."

Nora's eyes brightened when Dick came in.

"Have you missed me, little girl?" he said, stooping down to kiss the happy face.

"You jest bet she has, Dick. She's jest watched that winder every minute this afternoon," answered Mrs. Morris, with a jolly little chuckle, for she knew what Dick's errand had been.

Nora made no answer except to lay her cheek against Dick's and pat his face.

"Now let's see what I have here," said Dick, unstrapping his bundle and proceeding to untie the cords. Mrs. Morris

stood by with sleeves rolled up and arms akimbo, watching with pleased expectancy as the wrappings were removed from what proved to be a large paste-board box.

"Have you been getting a lot of new clothes, Dick?" asked Nora, watching the removal of the wrappings with great interest.

"Yes," answered Dick, with a funny smile, "but I'm awfully afraid they won't fit me."

"What makes you think so? Oh!" she exclaimed as Dick unfolded to her delighted gaze a beautiful blanket robe, saying as he did so: "That won't fit me, sure; I guess it's for you." It was a soft gray and blue, tied with blue ribbons, and there was a pair of dainty blue worsted bedroom slippers to match.

"For *me*! Oh! oh! oh! Dick, where

did you get 'em? Oh, I never——” Nora fairly gasped with surprise and delight.

Dick went on taking out the contents of the wonderful box. There was a warm fur-trimmed cloak, with jaunty little turban to match, fur-lined gloves, too—a complete suit. Then a plaid dress, all made up, such as Nora had never before seen or dreamed of.

“Oh! *oh!* how *be-e-autiful*—how lovely; how did it come? O Dick, who sent these to me?”

Nora clasped her hands around Dick's neck and hugged him with all her puny strength. “It's like a fairy story, isn't it? And oh—who is the fairy?”

“Well, dear, it's a pretty big fairy,” said Dick, laughing. “These things, most of them, are from the men over at the Flat to the brave little girl who

saved their lives. They wanted to show you how thankful they were. So they all chipped in and I sent the money off to my mother, and good, kind Mrs. Morris sent the measures for your cloak; and that's who the fairy was. Ah, what's this?" It was marked "For Mrs. Morris," and proved to be a pair of fur-lined kid gloves and a handsome knit hood.

"For the land's sake! Aint that the beautifulest thing! Well, I never; I'm jest beat!" Mrs. Morris' pleased surprise delighted Dick.

"That's mother's doings, Mrs. Morris; she——"

"Oh, you needn't say nothin', Dick Wallace. You're at the bottom of it. I never was so took back. What hev I done to git all this?"

"You've been just the best woman

ever was," said Nora, "taking such lovely care of me all this time, you dear thing," patting Mrs. Morris' comely bare arms.

There were some handkerchiefs for Nora, and also for Dick marked "From Jessie," and at the bottom of the box two beautiful books, also "For Nora, from Jessie, her true friend."

"Just to think, your darling little sister is my friend! That is best of all!" said the happy child, resting her head with a contented sigh on Dick's shoulder.

"What can I send her, Dick? I must send her something as soon as ever I can. I have fifty cents all my own."

"She'd like your picture, 'on snowshoes in a snowstorm,' she said in a letter to me. So we'll manage that some day when you are all well," said Dick, adding, "But my little sick sister is tired out and

must go to sleep. I'll hold her and rest her."

He gathered her up in his arms, and with her bright head resting on his shoulder the weary, happy child was soon in a quiet sleep.

## CHAPTER VII.

## NORA'S RETURN.

AT last there came a day of great rejoicing in Poverty Flat. Nora was coming home! Her father, Richard Davis, and Tim had gone over the day before to bring her back with them. She had been so carefully nursed through the long weeks of illness that, although still weak and lame, yet there would be no danger, her good nurse thought, in her being carried home, since the weather was so mild.

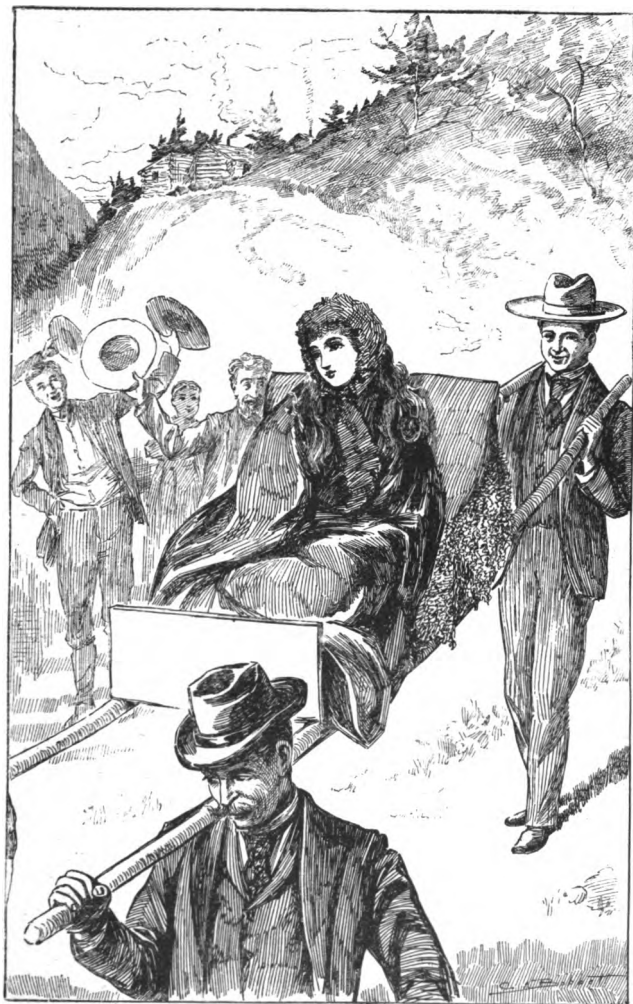
How different was her return over that once terrible trail! She was not alone now, nor beaten by the pitiless wind, blinded by the wild whirling snow,



breathless and exhausted. Borne in the strong arms of the men whose lives she had saved, the little heroine came home again, over the bleak mountain, where the snow still lay heavily, through the forest of tasseled pines, into the valley, to the mother who had waited so long for her child's return.

When the four men—Dick Wallace came, of course—bearing the litter on which Nora lay, enveloped in wraps and warm skins, came to the Fleming cabin, all the men from the mine stood on each side of the path leading up to the door, with bared heads, to give their little deliverer welcome.

When Dick lifted her from the litter to carry her into the cabin Davis cried out: "Three cheers for the bravest child God ever made!" How heartily the cheers rang out as the caps were tossed high in



"Three cheers for the bravest child God ever made!" Page 76.



air! Then the men filed into the cabin "jist fur a look at her" as she lay on the bed, with her head on her glad mother's breast. The roses were all gone from her cheeks, but the old sweet smile was still there, and a happy light shone in the beautiful eyes.

Such a white, thin little hand it was that lay in the big brown palms of the men, each in turn, who, taking it tenderly as if it might break in their grasp, said brokenly—those who found voice to speak at all: "God bless the darlin'."

"Och! Nora darlint!" exclaimed Mike Flaherty, "sure if it hadn't been for yez and yer snowshoes ivery live man of us would 'a' been dead intirely the day. Aint that the blissid truth, boys?"

"It is, fer a fact," came the hearty reply from the few who lingered near the door.

Then Nora began to thank the men for their beautiful gifts, but Mike again interrupted her. "Don't shpake of it, Nora! Didn't yez save all our lives and give us another chance for spindin' money? Sure that box is but a dhrop av gratitude jist. Somethin' better'll be comin' to yez or me name's not Flaherty. Jist be afther waitin' a bit."

So saying, with a wise wag of his rough head, Mike went out with his comrades, leaving the tired but happy child to rest in her glad mother's arms.

That night folded in a happy household, united once more under the humble roof. It was a night of general rejoicing throughout the Flat that the little heroine was restored to them from the very jaws of death.

But the best of all happened afterward. This is how it came about:

Richard Davis, the foreman, wrote to the president of the large mining company, telling in all its details the story of the slide: of Nora's wonderful presence of mind, and her courage; of the terrible journey she had taken, braving the storm and cold; then of the rescue, and of Nora's long, dangerous illness that followed her exposure—all was faithfully told. Then he closed his letter with these words:

"I know the little girl well. She is unusually bright, and very fond of her books. It is her great ambition, the chief thought of her daily life, to have a good education. But she is entirely cut off from all means of acquiring knowledge, for there is no school of any sort here. Patrick Fleming, her father, is one of our best miners, but he is poor, having only his wages, and a large family to support."

The president of the Transcontinental Mining Company was in his handsome, comfortable office in New York when this remarkable letter came. It was a long letter, and it took the gentleman a long time to read it. He was obliged to take off his eyeglasses repeatedly and wipe them, and he blew his handsome nose so vigorously and so often that his clerk looked up anxiously, thinking he must be coming down with the grippe.

When he finally finished the letter he laid it thoughtfully down, and began pacing up and down the room.

"Never heard of such a thing in all my life! Never! Fancy Avis or Edith doing anything like that! My darlings out in the cold!" he muttered. "Something must be done for that plucky little Rocky Mountain girl. Right off, too."

He immediately telephoned to the directors and stockholders to meet with him that evening "for special and important business regarding the mine."

When the letter was read before the "special meeting" the president rose and, clearing his throat, for a lump in it made his voice husky, said:

"I think you will all agree with me in saying that the one thing to be done for this noble child is to make her the ward of this company." Hearty applause followed this remark, and the speaker went on: "I therefore suggest that a sum of money shall be deposited in one of the National Banks for the purpose of generously — mind, I say *generously* [here everyone smiled]—defraying all expenses of board, tuition, and with all the 'extras' she wants, and clothes for little Nora Fleming at the best schools until she is



twenty years of age. The company was never so flourishing as now; a new and very rich lead has been opened in the "Silver Heart," so Davis writes, and thanks to that brave child we haven't thirty lives on our consciences—nor twenty families to provide for. Who will make the motion?"

The motion was made and seconded without delay, and carried unanimously.

A generous sum of money was forthwith deposited in a Denver bank, the interest of which should defray all Nora's expenses at school, "with every advantage that could be given her," the president of the company wrote, giving the matter his own personal attention.

When Nora was told the good news she could hardly believe it. It seemed too good to be true, that she was really going to have a thorough education;

that was what the letter said that Richard Davis brought up and read to her. She was to go to the best schools until she was twenty. The darling dream of her heart was to be realized.

She fixed her eyes thoughtfully on Davis' face as he read the letter, and then explained how everything was to be managed—how a nice, homelike school had been selected where she would go in the fall; how a lovely, kind lady was going to take charge of her; and how she should come home every summer.

"I can't seem to believe it. It doesn't seem as if it was me at all," Nora said after a thoughtful silence. "It's like a story-book, isn't it?"

"Deed, thin, it'll be no story-book whin ye're gone from me!" exclaimed her mother, beginning to cry. "The light av the house'll be gone out intirely."

"Mamma, don't feel so badly. *I* don't want to go away from you—but oh, I *do* want a chance to be something—and I can't be unless I have an education. Don't you see, mamma? You don't want me to grow up to be a know-nothing, do you?" Nora's arm was around her mother's neck. "I can help you so much, and educate all my little brothers and sisters."

There were many like scenes enacted during the summer before Nora left her mountain home for school. But hard as the parting was, Mrs. Fleming had too much good sense and true love for her little girl to prevent her going.

Early in the fall she left her home under the shadow of the great mountains to take up the new life that had opened so unexpectedly for her. Loving

wishes followed the little heroine on her way. All the camp turned out to say good-by as the stage stopped to take in the little passenger for Denver. "And take good care of my lamb, Mither Davis," said the weeping mother.

"That I will, Mrs. Fleming," said Richard Davis heartily as he shook hands. "Come, little girl, the stage cannot wait." With one more clinging hug and kiss Nora tore herself from her mother's arms, and was lifted into the stage.

"All aboard!" shouted the driver, gathering up his reins. Then with a crack like a pistol shot of his long-lashed whip, a parting blast from the horn, the beautiful horses sprang gayly forward, and amid the rattle of chains and rumble of wheels our little heroine was gone from her mountain home.

"Sure what's the good of book

larnin'?" said Mike Flaherty as he mournfully shouldered his pick. "The saints be praised, I'm contint wid the little gal as she is, she's that sinsible, now."

**THE END.**









